

BUDGET LETTER

SUBJECT: OUT-OF-STATE TRAVEL REQUESTS—APPROVAL BY THE GOVERNOR'S OFFICE	NUMBER: 21-06 (Revised)
REFERENCES: GOVERNMENT CODE SECTIONS 11032 AND 13030, STATE ADMINISTRATIVE MANUAL SECTIONS 0760-0765	DATE ISSUED: April 22, 2021
	SUPERSEDES: BL 20-05

TO: Agency Secretaries
Department Directors
Departmental Budget and Accounting Officers
Department of Finance Budget and Accounting Staff

FROM: The Governor's Office

To prevent the spread of COVID-19 during the pandemic and ensure the safety of state employees, many adjustments and accommodations were made to the state work environment over the past year, including an increase of employees working from home and the cancellation of all non-essential travel. While many of the COVID restrictions remain in effect, as we move toward a post-pandemic recovery, the state anticipates that some departments will be positioned to resume in person work for **mission critical** activities that requires related travel in fiscal year 2021-22.

We strongly recommend departments apply the lessons learned from the pandemic, especially that meetings, classes and conference participation can often be attended online and result in cost savings for the department. Further, actions taken in BL 20-37 (Current Year and Ongoing Expenditure Reductions) to improve operation efficiencies and to permanently reduce state operations by 5-percent, including travel efficiencies, remain in effect.

However, if travel is in fact required, to accommodate the potential need departments may submit the annual out-of-state travel (OST) blanket request to the Governor's Office pursuant to the provisions outlined in this Budget Letter. The OST blanket request has two separate components, both of which need to be sent to the Governor's Office for review or approval no later than **May 14, 2021**.

The first component should only include trips that meet specific mission critical criteria (defined below) and will require approval from the Department Director **and** the Agency Secretary (or a commensurate level). To track trips subject to Chapter 687, Statutes of 2016 (AB 1887) restrictions, please include a separate section within the mission critical component for trips to states listed on the [Attorney General's prohibited state travel website](#).

The second component of the blanket request should include trips that are discretionary but that the agency believes represent a benefit to the state and should be considered for approval by the Governor's Office. Please review the criteria carefully. If a trip provides a benefit but is not required, then it falls into the discretionary category. Remember, there is no discretionary travel to prohibited states.

Each trip listed in the Mission Critical section should contain the following information:

- Purpose of the trip and mission critical criteria it meets.

- Destination.
- Projected cost of the trip and the source of funding.
- Number of travelers and role of each traveler.
- Separate section for AB 1887 trips.

Each trip listed in the Discretionary section must contain the following information:

- Purpose of the trip and an explanation why it is in the best interest of the state.
- Destination.
- Projected cost of the trip and the source of funding (use fund name as shown in the Governor's Budget).
- Number of travelers and role of each traveler.
- Impact if the trip is denied.
- Impact of the traveler's absence on regularly assigned duties.

Mission critical criteria (travel subject to AB 1887 restrictions must meet one of these):

- Enforcement of California law (not training or meetings).
- Auditing.
- Revenue collection.
- A function **required** by statute, contract, or executive directive.
- Job-required training necessary to maintain licensure or similar standards **required** for holding a position, if comparable training cannot be obtained in California or a different state not subject to the travel prohibition.
- Equipment inspection as **required** by a contract.
- Meetings or training **required** by a grant or to maintain grant funding.
- Litigation related (depositions, discovery, or testimony).
- Requests by the federal government to appear before committees.
- A function **required** for the protection of public health, welfare, or safety.

All OST blankets must be submitted to the Governor's Director of Operations by **May 14, 2021**.

This deadline provides adequate time to review and approve OST blankets for the 2021-22 fiscal year, and should prevent travel disruptions by reducing the need for departments to submit individual trip requests for travel already included in a blanket that has not yet been approved.

Hard copy paper submission (no electronic versions accepted) of an OST blanket must include as a coversheet the most recent version of the Blanket Approval for OST Travel Form [STD. 260](#), which can be found on the Department of General Services' website.

Departments are required to submit individual OST requests for Governor's Office approval when any of these criteria apply:

1. A department's OST blanket has been submitted but not yet approved by the Governor's Office.
2. A need to add persons to a trip listed in the approved travel blanket.
3. The cost of a trip approved in a travel blanket will increase by more than 10 percent.
4. The trip is not covered by [SAM Section 0762](#).
5. The trip involves travel to high profile locations such as Hawaii, Alaska, territorial possession, or foreign countries.
6. Mission critical trips not included in the 2021-22 fiscal year travel blanket to states covered under AB 1887.

Individual trip requests must be submitted on the most recent version of the OST Approval Request Form [STD. 257](#), which can be found on the Department of General Services' website. These requests must include a cost breakdown of the trip and fund source clearly identified (no acronyms). Requests must be routed through the respective agency and received by the Governor's Director of Operations at least 14 days before travel is scheduled to begin. Individual OST requests should be submitted electronically to the Governor's Office at ostrequest@gov.ca.gov.

If departments do not adhere to this timeframe and if the forms are not filled out accurately and completely, the request may be denied and individual employees will not be reimbursed for travel costs or may be subject to other consequences. Please refer to [SAM Sections 0761](#) and [0764](#) and [Government Code Section 13030](#) for additional information regarding non-compliance with OST requirements.

Please route through your Agency and mail all OST blanket requests by the **May 14, 2021** deadline to the **Office of the Governor** as follows:

ATTN: Director of Operations
Governor Gavin Newsom
1303 10th Street, Suite 1173
Sacramento, CA 95814

Requests must include the name of a contact person with e-mail and phone number, should follow up or clarifications be necessary.

Please note that the Capitol is currently closed to the public so travel blankets may not be dropped off to the Governor's office this year. Additionally, instead of a wet signature an electronic signatures will be accepted on the hard copy.

/s/ Richard Gillihan

RICHARD GILLIHAN
Chief Operating Officer